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ABSTRACT

In an effort to identify problem areas related to poor academic performance at Harcum Junior College (Pennsylvania), an anonymous mail questionnaire survey was conducted among all day division faculty in May 1975. The first part of the survey asked respondents to rank 21 listed characteristics of "poor" students. The findings for the Harcum faculty are compared with the findings of a previous administration of a similar questionnaire to faculty at Frostburg State College (Maryland). Both faculties considered the inability to synthesize and apply conceptual principles to be the most prevalent characteristic of the academically poor student. Furthermore, both faculties considered negative attitudes toward the teacher or course content to be the least prevalent characteristic. The second part of the survey asked respondents to select from a list of four characteristics the most common cause of poor academic performance: 30.5 percent selected poor study habits; 29.2 percent selected lack of knowledge and skills; 22.2 percent selected lack of motivation; and 18.1 percent selected poor classroom participation--these opinions varied significantly from those of the Frostburg faculty. The implications of these findings are noted, and a bibliography is included. The remarks of Harcum respondents to the open-ended questionnaire items are appended. (Author/DC)

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(IV)

Poor Academic Performance-Why?

1. Talent loss or waste due to student academic failure has been one of the critical problems in American higher education (Algier, 1972). This past year at Harcum annual student voluntary dropouts rose from a 4% rate last year to 5.3% - Why?

In an effort to pinpoint (identify) problem areas related to poor academic performance (a basic cause of dropouts), an anonymous mail questionnaire survey in late May 1975 was conducted among all day division faculty of the College. The questionnaire instrument utilized was adapted from the very excellent one developed by Dr. Jae W. Choi, Director of Institutional Research at Frostburg State College, Frostburg, Maryland. (I am indebted to Dr. Choi for making it available).

As has been noted, through the practice of exclusion and academic dismissals, institutions of higher education have avoided dealing with marginal students who could potentially graduate from college. (Choi, 1973). Not so at Harcum!

As was reported several years ago, Harcum, as a matter of affirmative policy, has accepted 'calculated risk' students. The results of this practice were documented in several in-house research reports and an article published in 1971. The penultimate paragraph of the article states:

> "In consideration of the factual data summarized in this study and further detailed in studies IRR 69-4 and IRR 70-4, it is concluded that substantial evidence exists to recommend the continued careful selection and matriculation of so-called 'marginal' or academic risk applicants for admission to Harcum. It is evident that such 'calculated risks' can and do persist to Harcum graduation; and further, do succeed in gaining acceptance to 4-year institutions; or in the case of graduates from 'terminal' programs, in locating acceptable employment" (Blai, 1971: p. 22)

Unfortunately, as Choi points out - "Those students labeled 'high risk' or 'marginal' are usually stigmatized as academically inferior and consequently dumped out, leaving only cursory investigation into fundamental causes of failure" (Choi, 1973, p. 2). The inquiry reported here is a replication of his efforts to be less-than-cursory!

As Wilson (1972) has observed, no one factor leads to academic failure. Those students who become 'flunkouts' reveal a melange of academic deficiencies, cultural disadvantages, lack of goal orientation, or mistakenly chosen majors. As Blai (1972) has indicated:

> "There are various elements of student characteristics and environmental 'press' reported to differentially predict at the .05 or higher levels of confidence between the junior college student persister and non-persister. These.....(include):

JC 750 412

(1) Dropouts showed tendency to be enrolled for fewer than 12 units; persisters 12 units or more.
(2) Dropouts tended to be employed more times outside school than persisters.
(3) Dropouts tended to have attended more schools prior to the 10th grade than did persisters.
(4) Mothers of dropouts tended to have less education than mothers of persisters.
(5) At two-year colleges, highest dropouts occurred at private, church-related (29%), followed by private, independent (24%), co-ed schools (29%), and all female schools (19%).

In addition, a study (Astin, 1972) revealed that the principal predictors of non-persistence, both at two and four year colleges included:

(1) plans to marry while in college
(2) holding a job during academic year
(3) smoking cigarettes
(4) being a female
(5) turning in paper or theme late
(6) having no religious preference

And - in an earlier study (Panes, Astin, 1967) the "major" reasons stated for leaving 4-year colleges included:

Male	Reason	Female
27%	(1) Dissatisfied with college environment	27%
26%	(2) Wanted time to reconsider goals/interests	18%
24%	(3) Could not afford cost	18%
22%	(4) Changed career plans	21%
16%	(5) Academic record unsatisfactory	6%
11%	(6) Tired of being a student	6%

Analysis further revealed that characteristics of students not completing four years included:

(a) comes from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
(b) have lower grades in high school.
(c) have lower level of initial educational aspirations than do students who complete four years.

As Choi (1973, pp 2, 3) so cogently has noted: "In order to salvage potential 'flunkouts' by improving their ability to cope with college work, causes of poor academic performance must be specifically detected, and appropriate educational programs should be organized. The literature is replete with investigations into predicting and identifying successful college students. However, few studies have attempted to focus on the specific causes of college students' failure as perceived by the teaching faculty, one of the most important variables existing in the educational process."

Although it is recognized that faculty perceptions of failing students may well vary, it is believed that a careful analysis of their assessments can be productive for both the College and 'salvagable' failing students. Therefore this replication inquiry was undertaken to: (a) analyze faculty perceptions of poor academic performance of students in relation to instructional needs,

(b) consider establishing relevant instructional units and services in order to meet specific instructional/learning needs of students.

(c) to maintain and upgrade college standards of academic productivity.

The questionnaire instrument utilized consisted of two parts; some "21 objective items designed to reflect the faculty perceptions of poor students' behaviors in the areas of attitudes, work-study habits, classroom behaviors, skills, and level of thinking. The respondents had the choice of checking one of these categories for each item: 'Strongly Disagree', 'Somewhat Disagree', 'Don't Know', 'Somewhat Agree', and 'Strongly Agree'.

Four other items were listed as "Other", permitting faculty to identify additional areas which, in their judgement were characteristic of the student with poor academic record. The final two items on the questionnaire were open-ended, requesting respondents to: (1) "comment on poor student performance in your field," and (2) "recommendations on what can be done to improve poor student performance in your field." (Choi, 1973, pp. 4-5)

The pre-structured, twenty-one objective items were given weighted multipliers for scoring responses: "-2" for "Strongly Disagree", "-1" for "Somewhat Disagree", "0" for "Don't Know", "+1" for "Somewhat Agree" and "+2" for "Strongly Agree". Responses were counted, then multiplied by those multipliers to get weighted composite scores for each item. The "Other factors" and two open-ended items were separately analyzed from the pre-structured twenty-one items and simply frequency-counted and converted into percentages. These permitted the faculty to cover any items not listed in the structured-objective section of the questionnaire. Obviously, the questionnaire items listed do not exhaust all factors causing students' poor performance: they do, however, seek to identify possible elements generally regarded as significant characteristics.

The responses of the 29 faculty members to the pre-structured objective items, (some 80% of the total invited to participate!) are summarized in Table 1 which follows. These are tabulated in the form of a frequency distribution and computed into weighted composite scores for each item. According to the size of composite scores, items are rank-ordered from the highest to the lowest. The rank-order numbers appearing in parentheses are those of the 69 faculty members at Frostburg State College in Maryland who responded to a similar questionnaire in 1973. It is immediately apparent in scanning these parallel rankings that there is absolute agreement in the extremes rankings and considerable variations in between.

Specifically, both faculties place thinking capabilities as top-priority rankings for those characteristics most-associated with the academically-poor student. Also, from among this forced-choice group of 21 characteristics, both groups characterize as least-important the attitudes of 'poor' students toward the teacher and course content. The average ranking difference between these two faculties is a rather substantial 3.5, ranging from a zero difference among four designated characteristics to the most substantial difference in the characteristic - "Are not prepared for college work": Harcum 5th ranked, Frostburg 19th ranked.

Among the Harcum faculty this higher ranking of student preparation for college work is also accompanied by their collective ranking into 3rd most frequent characteristic of - "Not able to read materials efficiently and effectively." As Choi (1973) notes: "Although every characteristic given in Table 1 is interrelated, the ability to interanalyze and apply conceptual principles seems the most important factor for success in college learning." Certainly when the first six Harcum-ranked characteristics are reviewed, Dr. Choi's comment is equally applicable!

TABLE I:- Faculty-perceived Characteristics of Poor Students-in descending rank-order

Description of Characteristic	Weighted composite score	
1. Not able to synthesize factual & conceptual principles	(1st)	48
2. Not able to apply principles in analagous situations	(2nd)	46
3. Not able to read college materials efficiently & effectively	(11th)	44
5. Not able to comprehend conceptual principles	(7th)	40
5. Have not mastered prerequisite course skills & knowledge	(8th)	40
5. Are not prepared for college work	(19th)	40
7. Not able to perform adequately on major exams	(3rd)	37
8. Not able to write effective essays	(4th)	34
9. Not able to comprehend factual literature or materials	(15th)	32
10. Not able to take good notes	(17th)	31
11. Submit assignments late or not at all	(6th)	27
12.5 Fail to attend class regularly	(5th)	26
12.5 Rarely participate in class discussions	(10th)	26
14. Not able to perform adequately on short periodic quizzes	(13th)	25
15. Not able to write satisfactory term paper	(14th)	24
16. Do not ask questions in class	(8th)	23
17. Do not confer with instructor	(12th)	20
18. Complete lab assignments ineffectively	(16th)	19
19. Have negative attitude toward course content	(18th)	14
20. Have not completed catalog prerequisite courses	(20th)	2
21. Have a negative attitude toward teacher	(21st)	-8

Five years ago, an inquiry among Harcum faculty (Blai, 1970) revealed the following reasons as their bases for the assignment of some 449 "F" and "D" grades. The first five items listed reflect forced-choice decisions, the 6th through 16th responses to an open-ended category - "other reasons".

1st -	Poor test and exam scores	=	32%
2nd -	Does not attend classes	=	16%
3rd -	Does not participate in class discussions	=	12%
4th -	Does not complete assignments	=	10%
5th -	Does not prepare written assignments	=	6%
6th -	Finds course too difficult	=	6%
7th -	Poor preparation of assignments	=	4%
8th -	Poor attitude	=	3%
9th -	Poor work habits	=	3%
10th -	Poor study skills	=	2%
11th -	Psychological adjustment problems	=	2%
12th -	Lazy	=	2%
13th -	Does not wish to be in college	=	1%
14th -	Language-communications problems	=	1%
15th -	Dishonesty	=	1%
16th -	High school preparation not adequate	=	1%

Perhaps the most dramatic shift noted between the Harcum faculty responses in 1970 and 1975 is that "High school preparation" in 1970 was last-ranked as a factor for deficiency-grade assignments, whereas "Are not prepared for college work" moved up sharply to 5th most frequently ranked reason in 1975. Another major shift noted is that "Poor test and exam scores" was top-ranked by the Harcum faculty in 1970, whereas it is barely included among the top one-third array of reasons among the 21 characteristics in 1975.

Several other major differences are noted in that class attendance drops from 2nd-ranked in 1970 to 12.5th ranked in 1975, as does participation in class discussion from 3rd-ranked in 1970 to 12.5th in 1975. Similarly, "Does not complete assignments" drops from 5th-ranked in 1970 to 11th-ranked in 1975. In summary, the major shift occurring between the two Harcum-faculty inquiries appears to be that cognitive factors of learning in 1975 replace classroom performance factors receiving the top-rankings in 1970.

The second part of the questionnaire asked respondents to "check each of the following you consider characteristic of the poor academic student." These were included to elicit additional information not covered in the 21 pre-structured characteristics. These are summarized in Table 2, responses of the Frostburg State College faculty being listed in parentheses.

TABLE 2:- Faculty Perceptions of Poor Academic Performance Causes

Characteristic	Percentage
Poor study habits	30.5 (34.3)
Lack of knowledge and skills	29.2 (14.3)
Lack of motivation	22.2 (42.8)
Poor classroom participation	18.1 (8.6)

As Table 2 reveals, cognitive skills and study habits reflect the majority concensus of the Harcum faculty. This is internally consistent with their responses to the 21 structured characteristics in the earlier section of the questionnaire as well as the general comments (See Appendix) which were offered in response to the last two open-ended items on the questionnaire.

The thought-provoking comments in the Appendix should serve as a valuable stimulus to all Harcum faculty and staff members who share professional concern with the learning/teaching activities at the College. This material deserves careful study.

Dr. Choi (1973) in the Implications section of his study offers very cogent comments which are equally applicable to this parallel-perceptions inquiry. I therefore quote them in their entirety.

Implications

"Information included in this study immeasurably adds to the possible salvage of talent waste at the College. Several implications are prepared for practical purposes.

1. The most effective way for salvaging academic failure is dependent upon faculty who really can motivate students. Developing and employing innovative instructional techniques could aid student motivation. Also, as the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education recommended in its final report entitled Priorities for Action, there is a need by faculty to reaffirm their responsibility

for providing inspiring teaching. Through this teaching, students can experience success. Initial success, in many instances, is the basis of further success.

2. The academic performance of a college depends heavily on the quality of faculty, supportive staff, and administrators. Nevertheless, success of potential college dropouts is very often affected more by how successfully they have been initially treated by faculty members than by the kinds of programs offered. Among other things, a faculty member's commitment would seem to contribute significantly to the salvation of potential dropouts.

3. Potential academic talent waste could be avoided if the institution clearly defines its mission for all students. The majority of students need administrative policies which can help improve their achievement without building a permanent defeatism, so they can ultimately graduate with a degree. What is needed, for example, is the institution of an alternative grading system, a mastery learning system in which a student reaches certain prescribed levels of competency, or special rehabilitation programs.

4. The faculty maintains that students are unable to function in an analytical and conceptual approach which is vital at the college level. The teaching of these methods and processes must be integrated with the course content in order for the student to perform at this level. Mandating regular class attendance appears to be another necessity. Since the faculty opines that regular class attendance is important to student achievement, mandatory class attendance possibly may result in poor performing student mastering content and intellectual processes.

5. Forcing those students who lack motivation into acquiring self-discipline through frequent self-examination of their performance would seem an effective means of changing behavioral patterns as opposed to the popular counseling theory that emphasizes a non-directive approach."

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Director of Research

July 1975

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Appendix

Following are the unedited remarks of respondents to the two open-ended questionnair items:

A - Please comment on poor student performance in your field, lack of motivation, poor study habits, etc.

B - What, specifically, can be done to improve poor student performance in your field?

..... The most common denominator in defining the poor student is poor study habits and inability to communicate - poor English skills. This shows up in every science course I teach. Not only are they unable to comprehend lectures and take notes, but do not understand questions asked on exams, therefore cannot answer them.

I have found that these students often do better when I give them an oral exam and explain exactly what I'm asking - something I am now doing for students who consistently fail written exams.

..... More selective admissions policy! Pre-admissions counseling? Our students suffer from a lack of direction which perhaps is understandable in those of 17-18 years of age. They also tend to feel that social work is just "common sense", and therefore they should not need to read, study, take notes, etc. I am not sure what the answer is except perhaps a clearer idea of the field before they sign up for this program.

.....A - The 'poor' academic student, for the most part, is poorly prepared, lacks fundamental skills in reading and writing, is generally unwilling to participate - probably because "she" lacks knowledge; is fearful of giving information since she may not possess adequate knowledge; has been unable to comprehend and fulfill adequately the required assignments; either does not know how to study, or is unable to profit from study because of lack of skills and understanding.

B- Where the student is motivated, adequate training in fundamentals of reading, writing, and the development of good study habits should help. College students are generally now old enough to realize that they will have to be willing to engage in training for improvement of skills necessary for college work, but they will need expertise -well-trained instructors able to teach students who have deficiencies, either because of previous poor training or because of personality and social problems which helped to "handicap" students. There are many factors!

.....A - Poor academic habits - apparently accepted in previous school environments - make the adjustment to college more difficult for many poor students. The poor academic habits may include:

----non-attendance of classes
----inadequate attention and note-taking in class
----a concept of "extra credit" or "make-up" work to replace poor test performance or absence.

The social adjustment is a large contributing factor for many poor students. Others girls are facing double and triple responsibilities - school, a job, and raising a child - and simply cannot handle it all. Are we doing such a girl any favor to accept her as a full-time student?

B - (1) I have begun to recommend to over-burdened students that they extend their programs to five or six semesters. One student will begin the fall semester with a 'part-time' schedule to perform all her responsibilities with less tension.

B - (2) We certainly need remedial academic programs as well as counseling services if we continue to deal with this quality student.

(3) My personal resolve for next semester is that I shall be less accomodating to the "poor" student. I have come to realize that I do her no real favor to "understand" her absence from class, or to give her extra time for assignments and make-up tests for cut classes. My effort shall be to enforce fair but firm standards applicable for every student.

(4) I have found that some of the average or better students have become resentful of the special considerations given to the poor student. These better students do suffer from the need for repetitious reviews and a slower pace. I know of one student who may not return for these specific reasons. I hope this fair-but-firm standards, strictly enforced, will improve the performance of the "poor" student as well as the "better student".

.....With a few exceptions, some of which are both notable and noticeable, the great majority of students in the last three years at Harcum have been poorly educated in their previous schooling. Most of them have had no training in English grammar, composition, or literature. Many of them, as witness their reading scores, read very poorly and have a difficult time with textbooks.

In the field of "Behavioral Science" these handicaps - no fault of the student- require a careful selection of textbooks and other reading materials - which I consider we do rather well. Also, the type of teaching requires the teacher to be sure that her students know what is expected of them; the instruction has to be structured - outlines, learning objectives and assignments must be clearly spelled out. Study guides need to be used.

Motivation is more difficult to be achieved; improvement in performance helps the student to want to do more, and better. Assignments need to be given in which the student has a chance to be successful.

More emphasis needs to be placed on the validity of the "C" grade - as the average grade. Some students are unrealistic both about their abilities and college performance.

Finally, I thought it had been decided that a Fundamental English course, including Developmental Reading, and giving 4 hours of credit, would be given beginning Fall, 1975 with no extra charge!

.....A - There were only a few students in my class where this performance applies. I think they lack motivation and perhaps have not been taught, at home, to accept responsibility for developing their own future.

B - Since there are only a few individuals involved from my point of view, they should be terminated as students for their own good, and perhaps have a stimulating effect on other students. I'm afraid some students want an easy way for a limited college education which in the end will not be adequate for future career development.

.....A - Lethargy - a result of rarely, if ever, having to perform outside study or written assignments in public high schools. Suburban public schools and private and parochial high school students rarely show a lethargic attitude. Most of the failing type students lack the knowledge and skills of a normal 6th grade student. English is a 'foreign' language (grammar, spelling, sentence structure, vocabulary) to the failing student - without exception. Poor study habits? Generally, there are no study habits at all.

Regarding classroom participation - absences are usually very heavy, and when they do attend class they usually want step-by-step, one on one information, on performing class projects.

B - Orientation week: should accept management of time - a daily schedule allotting specific time to study and recreation. Most students rarely even read the Student Handbook, and show great surprise when informed that class absences are permitted for illnesses,

funeral attendance and such emergencies - NOT "6 cuts" each semester for "cutting" class because they don't feel like attending. A short test on the Student Handbook would be very revealing at the end of the Orientation Week; knowing they would be tested on its contents.

Early aptitude testing for Business area is a needed requirement. Previous request to guidance two years ago was apparently ignored.

.....A - Lack of conceptual skills; ability to translate to a new situation.

B - Usually in S. S. if student can't perform it is due to lack of basic intelligence which can't be remedied, or anxiety - which I attempt to work with throughout the year.

.....I feel that Harcum's "poor" students fall into two categories: first - those who do not attend class, do not pay attention in class, are late with assignments, unreliable and careless. Very often these students are bright and capable, but uninterested and they fail or withdraw. Often, of course, they are lacking skills in the questionnaire. Second - students who do attend class, work hard and conscientiously, and just don't have the ability to do even competant work. Sometimes they fail or withdraw because they are discouraged by lack of progress, and other times hang in by the skin of their teeth; passing barely, with D grades.

We have then two problem types; students who are capable but must be motivated and kept in line, and also students who are motivated and disciplined but need a strong remedial program.

.....A - motivation is the single, most pervasive element in poor academic performance. If there is no urge to 'go' other skills and capacities mean little.

B - Find out, if possible, what will 'turn her on'. Knowing what will motivate an individual is a make-break condition for learning and academic performance.

.....In the skills field of shorthand and transcription, the student's ability to use her talent well is hampered by Engligh language ability. A shorthand speed is only as good as the ability to transcribe it effectively; this means a knowledge of English, phrases which are acceptable in the business world, spelling, punctuation, etc. Too often the written word is not emphasized at all up to this point in a person's education. Objective tests and verbal communication are used extensively; when the student has to write or transcribe something intelligently, she frequently fails as a result. Reading and writing ability should be one of the business students strong points.

.....In answer to both questions: poor students need a better background before they take out courses. We should offer remedial courses at Harcum. (This is in the sciences). It should be made clear to the prospective student that she may be required to be at Harcum for more than two years!

.....Those in my area did not pass the courses because of poor study habits; did not take the Reading Improvement course which was recommended for those 30th percentile or below. Perhaps the motivation could be improved if the students had followed through with mastery of Reading.

Recommendation: The report of a student being absent from class is one area, and I believe we can do it more effectively. A student who has a pattern of class absences should be counseled regarding the reasons for absence. The instructor might note on the counseling report the reasons for poor work. This should have a follow-up by the instructor as well as the Academic Dean and Guidance Counselor. This might help to motivate the student to attend class, hand in work, etc.

Since I work with so many of the incoming Freshmen, I have found that study habits, reading and academic discipline are almost non-existent. Perhaps a program of structured courses might help; mini courses in vocabulary, spelling, reading - using film strips or other visual aids, tapes, etc.

Thanks for the opportunity to express myself on this important subject. If we admit these students to the College, we must try to do something for them - motivate, so they want to achieve.

.....A - Little relevant background reading; inability to handle logic and concepts.

B - Student motivation to 'catch-up' in terms of reading and writing skills. Attention to own failings in an organized and positive fashion.

.....A - In my course, which has mostly projects and some tests - I find missing a session can be disasterous - we are constantly doing, and if absent - it is difficult to get proper notes because it is all experiential.

B - To improve the situation would be to review the cut system - and perhaps discipline more firmly those over-cutting and making poor marks. I have few, but most of my girls should get A's or B's.

..... Fortunately, this is not yet a problem in the Optometric Technician program. However, drawing from experience teaching graduate students (Optometrists), I think a prime cause of student failure is the basic attitude that education (higher education) is a privilege and right that does not have to be earned. While most instructors try to motivate students and keep a high level of interest, some subjects cannot be made meaningful and relevant, etc., but are fundamental skills courses that must be mastered.

Poor language arts, reading, writing, expressing oneself adequately are, in my opinion, the major cause of poor academic performance.

.....A - There seems to be an increasing number of students in my classes who are devoid of preparation for college work. They lack the most rudimentary language skills. In addition, these same students appear to have a disproportionate number of excused(!) cuts,-- vague illnesses, tooth extractions, weather conditions adverse to driving...etc. etc.

I have made myself available to give extra guidance and help. The above students have the same reasons for not attending conferences; i. e. illness, etc. etc.

Another trend I have noticed is an increasing number of students who have unrealistic expectations about the grade rewards due them for inferior performance.

B - Our hallmark is to provide individual assistance and guidance. See what students are able to do before admitting them to courses where they will be over their heads. We should pay scrupulous attention to prerequisites. The flexibility in terms of the number of cuts should be investigated. The majority of students must be in class to succeed.

.....I have had an increasing number of 'poor' students. It is difficult to generalize about the reasons for the poor performance, but there do seem to be some common elements. First - their vocabulary is inadequate. During tests, for example, I spend a fair amount of time explaining the meaning of words. Second - they have difficulty in reading and comprehending the material. In some cases I have tried to minimize the use of texts and concentrate more on verbal or audio-visual presentations. Third - many of the so-called 'poor' students cannot think - they cannot reason or transfer their knowledge to a new situation. If these students are given 'application' questions or problems, they are lost. The test questions have to be stated the same way they are in class before they have a chance to pass - but this ends up as a memorization, not thinking.

I have no easy answers, but I do feel that there needs to be a greater emphasis on the basics: vocabulary, reading, comprehension, problem-solving, etc., We need, I feel, more remedial work. I have tried to work with the slower students in special group sessions and by using extensive review sheets. They were partly successful, but more intensive help and remedial work are needed.

.....A - Inadequate math background; inability for abstract thinking.
.....B - Improve study habits; enforce prerequisite requirements.

.....A - Lack of motivation. Little sense of responsibility. No reaching out ability. General unwillingness to be involved. General attitude of "don't bother me".

B - Admission standards need to consider student's desire to want to be at Harcum. Some students act as if they are not there of their own free will. There needs to be continual stress placed on the need to participate and be involved once the student gets to Harcum.

For comparison purposes, following are the various recommendations offered by the Frostburg State College faculty, listed in descending order of frequency suggestion was offered:

1. Screening process; Better screening prior to admissions; higher admissions standards; more effective 'weeding out' process.
2. Communication skills; Better reading/writing skills, and greater emphasis on communications skills.
3. Remedial programs: Strong remedial program; free tutoring program in carious fields.
4. Academic standard: Meaningful performance standards campus-wide.
5. Study skills: Better study skills; application of previous learning to new learning.
6. Students' goals and needs: Relate student's goals to course; primary value-attitude orientation for students; relate instruction to student's needs.
7. Classroom teaching and evaluation: Institute more problem sessions; solicit participation in class; use of tram teaching method; better preparation and relation of teachers; institute weekly quizzes.
8. Advisement to students: Making instructors very available to advisement.
9. Attendance: Check class attendance; require class attendance.
10. Grading: Abolition of grades; at least failing grades; drop P/NP option; never downgrade a student.
11. Teacher's quality: In service program for college teachers on campus; a sense of humor as a qualification of teachers; teachers should capture and interest and efforts of students.
12. Counseling service: Expand Counseling Center's Career Planning Service; free some of the counseling staff to work especially with sophomores, as this seems to be the most difficult year.
13. Mastering prerequisite courses: Have students master prerequisite courses.
14. High school education: Bring pressure to bear on the high schools to improve quality.
15. Subject matter: Better math preparation
16. Class size: Smaller class size.
17. Homework assignments: Require poor students to submit extra homework assignments.
18. General Studies Program: Drop General Studies Program.
19. Dormitory Life: Have definitely quiet study hours in dormitories.
20. Lab course: Make lab course optional for freshmen
21. Objective of course: Better communication concerning course objectives.
22. Course Load: Limit each freshman to one history survey course per semester.

After reviewing the various recommendations offered by these faculties at both a two-year and a four-year college, it is quite apparent that there is a substantial amount of congruence in their views. This might lead to a number of different explanations: the one here offered is that both faculties share a deep sense of professional commitment which is in the best traditions of the learned professions.

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